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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE; IMF-ARGENTINA;
UPCOMING ARGENTINE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS; 10/19/07

11. SUMMARY STATEMENT

Today's major international opinion pieces are related to the Armenian genocide; the status of IMF-Argentine ties; and doubts about governance in a future government of Argentine First Lady/Senator and Presidential Candidate Cristina Kirchner.

12. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "The Armenian issue"

Daily-of-record "La Nacion" (10/19) carries an op-ed piece by Juan Gabriel Tokatlin, professor of International Relations at San Andrs University, who opines "In early October, US President Bush announced he was against the House Foreign Relations Committee passing a draft resolution in acknowledgment that Turkey's premeditated and systematic murder of over 1,500,000 Armenians between 1915 and 1923 was genocide. Just a few days later, the resolution was endorsed by the Committee for 27-21 votes... Whether the resolution will finally be grappled with and approved by Capitol Hill still remains to be seen.

"Even though the non-binding legislative step is reported to have no impact on foreign policy, it would be mistaken to suppose that it lacks important symbolic value. There will always be 'reasons of State' to explain a position such as that of the US President. In this case, it is the importance of Ankara-Washington military ties ever since the Cold War and Turkey's geo-political value vis-`-vis the current war in Iraq. However, the fact that something can be explained does not imply that it is justifiable..."

"We should not accept either the argument used by several Republicans or the White House that the issue should be focused on by historians and not subject to a statement from any legislative body..."

In 2005, the main authorities of the International Association of Genocide Scholars... stated in a letter addressed to Turkish PM Recep T. Erdogan that historic evidence confirms the genocide committed against Armenians.

"President Bush has lost a new opportunity for his statements to be validated with facts... His action proves that today the US Executive Branch has gradually abandoned the defense of human rights and subdued peoples. Instead of defending memory, it opts to join those who deny it..."

"Of course, the US goes beyond its current president. The impulse of its civil society, cosmopolitan sectors, progressive movements and committed political leaders hope that, in spite of President Bush, some day Washington acknowledges the Armenian genocide. This will be a step against barbarism."

- "In search of a new stage in Argentina's ties to the IMF"

Marcelo Bonelli, economic columnist for leading "Clarin," comments (10/19) "Last night, (Argentine) Economy Minister Miguel Peirano traveled to Washington in a low profile-visit although he has made a political decision - he will return every IMF criticism of the Argentine economic situation in a tough and conclusive way. He has already implemented this strategy by criticizing the recessive proposal included in an IMF report that suggests 'cooling down the economy.'

"... Peirano and Martin Redrado's strategy in Washington has three pillars. First, the toughness with outgoing IMF authorities is aimed at making a division between outgoing authorities and incoming IMF (Managing Director) Dominique Strauss-Kahn. The purpose is blaming Rato and his staff for all the evils the IMF has represented for the Argentine economy during recent years. Second, (Peirano) will attempt to open a new stage starting with new IMF authorities. Third, under these circumstances, he would reportedly ask for a wink from Strauss-Kahn in favor of Argentine Paris Club debt negotiations.

"The Paris Club matters. If Cristina Kirchner wins the presidential elections, she knows that in the event she agrees on that debt, she would immediately convey positive signs to businessmen who need international funding as well as a wink of rapprochement with industrialized countries.

"The US will send a secret delegation to Buenos Aires in November. Washington's envoy will want to know what the next government will do and also he will want to clearly explain the White House's posture in terms of putting the bilateral relationship on a sound track..."

"... While the Argentine Government relies on Strauss-Kahn, doubts still prevail that he could disregard the past of confrontations and make more flexible the G7's tough posture towards Argentina. No one can overlook that the IMF new managing director is finally a representative of industrialized nations and receives orders from their governments.

"... In other words, Strauss-Kahn will hardly honor his promise to help Argentina if there is no prior G7 support..."

"In the Argentine Government's view, the current IMF offensive goes beyond a Washington internal dispute. The President insists that it is due to more profound reasons.

"Kirchner confessed that there is a clear attempt to internationally condition a future government of Cristina Kirchner... The strategy is reportedly aimed at deepening the implementation of 'cooling down' measures from the government."

- "First doubts over Cristina Kirchner's governance"

Alejandro Bercovich, on special assignment in Washington DC for business-financial "El Cronista," writes (10/19) "A US political think tank related to the Democratic Party (the Woodrow Wilson Center) organized a debate in Washington about Argentina's upcoming presidential elections.

"What captured the attention... were the questions made by attendants, mostly analysts focusing on the Southern Cone and related to the US Department of State. First, they wondered why Kirchner declined to stand for re-election himself and how the country will receive a female president..."

"Nonetheless, the thorniest questions were related to the governance guaranteed by Cristina Fernández in a year with a reinforced distributive struggle, record business profits and an average real salary slightly over its 2001 level. Political analyst Graciela Rímer attempted to dismiss doubts and she opined that only the PJ is in a position to keep the distributive struggle in check. However, she also warned that the PJ could well go from being a supporter to an eventual cradle of destabilization after the first half of a future term in office of Cristina."

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